To the Deans of Liberal Arts Colleges of the
Association of American Colleges

In response to a notice sent out last December as a sequence to some discussion among a number of deans, approximately fifty deans met at the Claridge Hotel in Atlantic City in the afternoon preceding the dinner of the annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges for the purpose of discussing the need and desirability of effecting a national organization of academic deans.

After a rather extensive discussion it seemed to be the unanimous consensus that such an organization was needed, since it would be the only national organization of its kind, all others being regional or according to types of institutions, and that it would fill a real need in providing an opportunity for deans to meet together, to share their experiences, to exchange points of view, to discuss problems chiefly concerned with the office of the dean, and at the same time create a greater interest in the Association of American Colleges on the part of the deans.

It was the consensus also of the group that the organization should be quite informal and that the officers should be a chairman and a secretary. It was further decided that an Executive Committee of four be appointed by the chairman to arrange further details for a meeting next year. Dean E. V. Bowers, of Marshall College, was elected chairman and Mrs. Page Karling, of Bernard College, secretary. However, at a meeting of the Executive Committee held the following day, Mrs. Karling asked to be relieved of the Secretaryship as she was only representing Dean Virginia Gildersleeve. The committee then appointed Dean Ruth Higgins to this office. The following were appointed as members of the Executive Committee:

Dean Edward R. Bartlett, DePauw University
Dean Edward Y. Blewett, University of New Hampshire
Dean Ruth Higgins, Beaver College
Dean Stephen A. Mulcahy, Boston College

The organization is to be known as the American Conference of Academic Deans. All academic deans having responsibility for the Liberal Arts curriculums of institutions which are members of the Association are eligible and are invited to become members of the Conference. It is the intention to keep the expenses down to a minimum, such as postage, mimeographing notices, paper, and other minor incidentals, and it is hoped that such expenses may be met by small voluntary contributions rather than by a membership fee.

The meetings of the Conference will be held the day preceding the annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges. The program is to be one of discussion by members of the Conference of problems of interest to deans. It is not the purpose at present to bring in any outside speakers, although this may need consideration at the next meeting. Therefore, members are requested to send in to the Secretary two topics each for discussion. The Executive Committee will then select from these topics and arrange a program.

It is not the intention that the Conference shall take the place of, supercede, weaken, or in any way interfere with regional, state, or other types of similar organizations already functioning, but rather that it should complement them.

In order to facilitate mailing notices and other information, a Membership Card is enclosed. All academic deans of Liberal Arts Colleges are urged to fill in the information and return to Dean Ruth Higgins, Beaver College, Jenkintown, Pa. A one cent stamp will satisfy Uncle Sam. Or, it may be enclosed with any suggestions or comments that may be affixed. The Committee not only welcomes, but invites suggestions and criticisms.

E. V. Bowers

August 15, 1945

E. V. Bowers, Chairman
Marshall College
Huntington, West Virginia